

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL OF POPULAR LITERATURE

Science and Arts.

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 124.

SATURDAY, MAY 17, 1856.

PRICE 1½d.

## 'STREET-BALLADS OF THE WAR.

It will be for Mr Macaulay, in the hundredth volume of his History, to set forth the more prominent results of the war with Russia; to tell us, or our descendants, how the balance of power in Europe was affected thereby, or how the prosperity of England was not affected at all by the addition of Ten millions to the national debt. But there are certain minor results which do not properly belong to the province of the historian, yet are worth recording for the benefit of the philosophical and inquiring minds of a future generation. We would be glad, for instance, that our friend the New Zealander, who in the year two thousand and odd is to sketch the ruins of St Paul's, had some notion of the extent to which the war has acted as a Popular Educator; of its contributions to geographical and general information; of how many repulsive and unpronounceable names of men and places, before known only to reviewers and leading-article writers—who, *ex officio*, know everything—have become domesticated at our firesides. We know there are some well-read people who will aver that the war did not, and could not add anything to their stock of knowledge; but from these, pitying their want of candour, we turn confidently to the great, intelligent, information-seeking British public, and invite that public to lay its hand on its heart, and tell us honestly whether, for example, it knew previously to the war what a Bashi-Bazouk was? and whether it had not a vague notion that it was a long pipe with an amber mouth-piece, to the use of which the Turks are much addicted? Also, we would ask whether it is not probable, that if the civil service commissioners, under similar circumstances, tried to ascertain what the candidates for office knew about Kara, a larger percentage of the answers would have had reference to vehicles than to the Armenian stronghold? Would any one, except the editor of *Bell's Life*, who, from his answers to correspondents, would appear to be a person of vast general information, have undertaken three years ago to give an off-hand statement of the geographical position of Petropaulovski? In short, without accumulating examples, we would put it to the nation at large, whether or not it has some fresh knowledge more or less useful to set off as *per contra* to the expense of the war?

And then what a gush of song we owe to the same cause! The original Hippocrene, we all know, was due to the hoof of Pegasus; but it would seem as if Lord Cardigan's charger had opened a fresh tap, so to speak. Our poets, one and all, from Tennyson to Tupper, have had their trumpet-stops out, and have discoursed

most eloquent martial music. For the first time these forty years, there has been a brisk demand for warlike rhymes; and transactions in 'brave—grave,' 'field—yield,' 'foe—no!' 'fly—die,' 'Old England's banner—fare thee well, Anna,' have gone off freely. At our concerts, good-natured-looking gentlemen with moustaches, bass voices, and lay-down collars, have growled forth sentiments of a bellicose, not to say blood-thirsty nature. Our music-publishers have been unwearied in stimulating us to 'Cheer for the Red White and Blue,' and in asking 'What will they say in England with piano accompaniment price two shillings?' But it is in our street-ballads, the lowest notes in our scale of harmony, that martial enthusiasm may be had in any quantity.

We have now before us ample evidence of the inspiring effect of war on the poets of Leather Lane and the 'Dials.' It is in the form of a sheaf of pure unadulterated street-ballads, with all the characteristics of that class of literature strongly developed. As usual, the paper is flimsy, the type apparently selected from what printers call 'pie,' without any regard to the proprieties of capitals, small letters, or italics. The feeble superannuated wood-cuts have that no-connection-whatever with the subject, which seems essential to ballad illustration. Here and there solemn black patches, like strips of court-plaster, join words together, or leave the end of a line to be filled up by the imagination of the reader. There are comic ballads inexpressibly dreary, and serious ballads particularly funny. Orthography, etymology, syntax, and prosody are utterly disregarded. Long words and stilted phraseology abound, for your ballad-buyer sets great store by polysyllables, and loves a good half-penny's worth for his half-penny. One other feature they have in common: uncouth, absurd, and occasionally coarse as they are, every one of them is honest and hearty, speaking out manfully for justice and against oppression. Furthermore, in the whole bundle—and it is not a thin one—coming though it does from that class on which war tells most severely, there is not one word of complaint, not one murmur, no shrinking from a righteous cause, because bread may be dear and wages low.

For this, if for no other reason, we think our war-ballads deserve notice among the minor results of the war. All honour to those who fought and fell, but let us not forget those at home who bore their part of the struggle without flinching. If they had no shot or shell to face, neither had they pride, pomp, and circumstance for stimulants; and yet it must have sorely tried the 'pluck' of many a paterfamilias in low-life to see four pair of small chilblained feet,

and not cry out for peace and new shoes—to look at the poor apology for a fourpenny loaf, and keep aloof from Hyde Park, where mischievous urchins were pelting the policemen. From first to last, the voice of the masses has been steadily for war. Peace-lecturers, armed with seductive financial arguments, or delicate subtleties of international policy, always found themselves in a minority: it was enough that the cause was that of freedom and justice. Truly it is pleasant, in these degenerate days, as Smelfungus insists on calling the present time, to light on any evidence that the old chivalrous spirit is not yet quite extinct in the nation of shopkeepers.

Should any further apology for introducing our specimens be required, we would say, with Scott, that 'the tradition conveyed in ancient ditties and ballads is necessary to confirm or correct intelligence collected from more certain sources.' The reader will at once observe that it is a duty we owe to him, to posterity, and to the New Zealander above mentioned, to call timely attention to these pieces of popular poetry, so that, rescued from the oblivion that would otherwise, we fear, await many of them, they may ultimately pass into the condition of 'ancient ditties and ballads.' Your balladist has a great eye for details. Hear how he thus sings of the warriors of Inkeremann:

They had no ammunition to fight with,  
And this the whole nation must own,  
Those brave hearts instead of retreating,  
Fought out the battle with stones.

And again:

The Guards, led on by Cambridge, were next brought into action,

And well these splendid soldiers their honour did maintain,  
Colour-sergeant Davis took good satisfaction,  
Five & twenty Russians by this grenadier was slain.  
Upon that day the colours he did save they say,  
And his manly form the Russians did oppose,  
With musket clubb'd through fire and smoke their ranks he broke,

This grand conversation on Sebastopol arose.

The last line presents considerable difficulties to the critic. Can Colour-sergeant Davis's interview with the twenty-five Russians be strictly called 'a conversation' unless, indeed, we assume that the word is used in the same sense as 'debate' in *Chevy Chase*? We are inclined, however, to believe that the poem, of which our extract forms a part, is an imitation of an older ballad, the *Conversation on Napoleon*, and that the burden or refrain of the latter is preserved throughout, from a laudable desire to copy the original faithfully, even to the sacrificing of perspicuity. That 'fire and smoke,' too, would seem to have been suggested by a line in the *Rejected Addresses*—but let us not be hypercritical.

It is refreshing, after a forty years' peace, to meet with the sturdy, old-fashioned John Bullisms, those dogged assertions of British invincibility under any circumstances, in which our fathers used to delight; and curious it is, and satisfactory too, to hear the English street-minstrel, who, at the beginning of the present century, could scarcely find words to express his contempt of France, now lifting up his voice in praise of French valour, and actually admitting the Gaul to an equality with the great, glorious, and never-to-be-sufficiently-extolled Briton. Unlike, however, his predecessors in the olden time, who, while glorifying their friends, could do honour to the courage of their foes, the ballad-writer of these days is a pure partisan. His side is alone brave and virtuous; the other, because it is the other, is necessarily cowardly, mean, and generally despicable. But, however we may deplore this fanaticism, we cannot deny that it

occasionally infuses spirit into his compositions, as in the following instance:—

Here's to the Allied Powers,  
My boys, with three times three  
That beat the cowardly Russians  
Then gain'd a victory;  
Tho' the Russians fought us two to 1  
With fire sword and ball  
To Frenchmen and Britannia's sons  
They was no use at all.

What could be more terse and idiomatic than this mode of expressing Russian inferiority?

Owing to gunpowder, steam, the Minié-rifle, and other causes, which we need not now mention, the art of war has been considerably modified, and in consequence the position of the war-poet is very different from what it used to be. Strategic authorities do not now consider the presence of a marching minstrel essential to the success of a campaign. Tyrtasus no longer goes forth with the army to the fight, or attunes his lyre to the crash of the battle-field; he stays at home, and receives his inspiration per electric-telegraph. He has, therefore, greater opportunities for reflection, and is more of a moralist and a philosopher than in days of yore. We have never seen a battle, but we can easily imagine that, in close proximity to one, a calm and contemplative style of composition is not so readily attainable as under circumstances where the shouts of the victors are replaced by *Cheer, Boys, Cheer*, from a distant barrel-organ, where, instead of the groans of the wounded, we have only the voice of Mrs Tyrtasus bewailing a superadded penny in the price of moist-sugar. Not the largest, but perhaps the most interesting part of our collection, consists of ballads written in this spirit. Here is an example of the philosophico-allegorical style: it is, for some reason best known to the poet, entitled *The Russian Bear*:

As a fair one of England was musing by the rolling sea,  
There came a wayworn traveller and landed by her side,  
That goddess of the British throne, whose robes was rich  
and costly,  
Which struck the stranger with amaze, and thus to her he cried—

The stranger is rather prolix, perhaps owing to the amaze with which he is struck, so we will merely give the substance of his remark. He informs the lady (whether her present gracious Majesty, or the female whose portrait we see on that side of a half-penny known in polite circles as the 'tail,' we know not) that her enemies threaten hostilities; he deprecates inactivity—recommends her to strengthen her navy, and promises victory if his advice is attended to. The lady replies, and we are at a loss which to admire most, her noble self-reliance, or her extreme politeness.

That lady did in diamonds shine, and to conversation did incline.

Just like some spotless beauty that goddess did reply,  
'I thank you noble stranger, and may you meet no ill design,  
The lion when again aroused will conquer or will die;  
But slow to anger he'll remain, Britannia's rights he will maintain,

Enemies you may insult that monarch if you dare,  
Nicholas remains our foe, and will towards the Turkey go,  
Arouse up little England and stop the Russian bear.'

The stranger, who is evidently a man of action, dissatisfied with the evasive tone of the lady's answer, still urges the necessity of such immediate measures against the Muscovites as will teach them that

They must mind how they behave, and not the Turkey for to crave.

And finally, the lady, who is obviously wearied with his verbosity, brings the interview to a close by

adopting his views—not so much, we fear, from conviction, as from a desire to be rid of so long-winded a Mentor.

O stronger, stranger, say no more, the bunch of roses I adore,  
The shamrock, thistle, and the rose will boldly stand the cause,  
They'll defend Britannia's shore as monarchs did in days of yore,  
Those hearts of oak with bravery will conquer in the wars;  
Those warlike instruments pull down, that long ago has rusty grown,  
And gallant shipping box to sea, and for defence prepare,  
If treachery it is not shown, then the day will be our own,  
Arouse up little England and stop the Russian bear.

In the last stanza, the reader will perceive something of that suggestive obscurity which forms the chief attraction of much of the poetry belonging to the present age. But, lest the lady's diction does not present any sufficient difficulty, we are happy to have it in our power to offer a passage from a Preston ballad which is as perfectly incomprehensible as anything in the language:

And Omar Pasha's generalship,  
Made the Russian judgment reel;  
And what dismay'd them more than all,  
The Turks charged them with steel.  
This might have made the Emperor,  
To rush his vanitary pride;  
But those that will not take advice,  
Must the consequence abide.

Before we put away the original, we must steal a few more lines, which, though intelligible, are worth quoting:

Let him remain at Petersburg,  
Otherwise Moscow;  
And confine his wild ambition,  
To his load of ice and snow:  
But Oh! may gracious Providence,  
Stay this strife in time;  
And may good-will and unity,  
Prevail o'er every clime.

And the parent's fears, the widow's tears,  
The orphan's sad implore;  
The crimson flood of human blood,  
Be known on earth no more.

The idea of treachery, which seems to give the heroine of the former piece some uneasiness, is a great favourite with the ballad-writers, as, indeed, it was with the populace at the beginning of the war. Every one recollects the absurd rumours that were rife some two years ago, when politicians raved about interlined dispatches and treachery in high places, and would have it that the war was a sham, and that the noble lord then at the head of the government was in the pay of the enemy; or, in the words of an intelligent omnibus-conductor of our acquaintance, that 'Haberdashen was a Rooshian, and the whole thing was a cross; and that was where it was.' All these were eagerly seized by the ballad-makers. Well they knew, the rogues, how to catch and cook the canards—to serve them up appetisingly garnished and stuffed—'horribly stuffed with epithets of war,' for the delectation of the populace, always pleased with a good grievance.

That story about the dispatches gave rise to several copies of verses, one of which leads off with these remarkable lines:

The Turkish war both near and far,  
Has played the very deuce then,  
And Little Al, the royal pal,  
They say has turned a Russian.

The poet then indulges in some strong observations on underhand-dealing, and, having brought his indignation

up to boiling-point, blows off his steam in the following sweeping anathema, incoherent from sheer passion:—

Bad luck they say both night and day  
To the Cobugs and the humbugs  
The wirtembugs, the scarebugs,  
And all the German horse-rugs:  
And all that will the laws obstruct  
The *peterbugs* and prussians,  
May providence protect the Turks  
And massacre the Russians.

After this, to read Lord John Russell's Lament—so full of quiet pathos, especially where he says:

I went like a fairy plenipotentiary  
To the town of Vienna, to settle the war  
But they'll not me believe then, they vow I've deceived them,  
And call me a friend of the great Russian czar—

is like rounding the pier-head at Folkestone, into the placid waters of the harbour, after a rough night in the Channel.

The unsatisfactory nature of the negotiations at Vienna was also a favourite subject. One of the ballads on this topic is remarkable for the bold comprehensive view it takes of the whole business:

The Northern Despot has put forth a claim  
To dismember Turkey, I tell you plain,  
To back his pretensions being void of all truth  
His army he sent to the banks of the Pruth.  
It seems as if England had nothing to lose,  
By the cowardly policy she now pursues,  
But the stake is enormous, believe what I say,  
And a difficult game she has got now to play;  
For if in Turkey the Russian can stand,  
Our Indian possessions are at his command.  
If Peel was alive it would not be the case,  
Nor the flag of old England to suffer disgrace;  
Instead of humbugging with letter and pen,  
It is bullets and bayonets to Russia he'd send,  
And England as usual would be in the front,  
With Sawney & Paddy the bear he would hunt.

Vice the grumble! Apart from its uses as a relaxation and a diversion, it occasionally has others. Who can say that the growls of the lion at home did not do something for the lion abroad in the way of greatcoats and roasted coffee?

The *Sufferings of the British Army at Sebastopol* is a title under which the ballad-writer, we will not say grumbles, but laments after his own fashion, in a strain homely enough, but full of good healthy feeling, as may be seen by these extracts:

All you who live at home in ease, and sleep on beds of down,  
Pray think of our brave soldiers who lie frozen on the ground,  
In the camp before Sebastopol, in mud up to their knees,  
The flower of our army there, has perished by disease.  
From the camp to Balaklava like horses they do work,  
Up to their knees in mud and snow, with neither shoes or shirt,  
Then slaving in trenches and guarding of the ground,  
Crush'd with fatigue and hunger, they in death's cold arms are found.

I heard a maid lamenting, in grief—she scarce could stand—  
Saying, my father died at Alma, and my love at Inkerman;  
My brother dear was wounded by the curs'd enemy  
And now lies in the hospital in the town of Scutari

In filth and dirt, without a shirt to shield them from the cold,  
A wet blanket wrapped around them, how dreadful to behold;  
Without a bed to lie their head, but are compelled alas!  
To lie fatigued and hungry upon the frozen grass.

O God protect our soldiers with thy all mighty hand,  
Grant them a victory, and guide them to their native land;  
Befriend their wives and children since war caused them  
to part,

Protect their aged parents, and ease their aching heart.

This is beyond criticism, and above ridicule: the lines  
are honest, and bid Martinus Scriblerus avault.

Here are some verses in honour of a lady, to whom  
belongs, not out of mere courtesy, that fine old Saxon  
title in which the patent of nobility is derived from  
Charity:

God sent this woman to succour the brave,  
Some thousands she's sav'd from an untimely grave  
Her eyes beam with pleasure, she's bounteous and good,  
The wants of the wounded are by her understood  
With fever some brought in, with life almost gone  
Some with dismantled limbs, some to fragments is torn,  
But they keep up their spirits, their hearts never fail  
Now they're cheer'd by the presence of a sweet  
Nightingale.

Her heart it means good—for no bounty she'll take  
She'd lay down her life for the poor soldier's sake  
She prays for the dying, she gives peace to the brave,  
She feels that a soldier has a soul to be saved.  
The wounded they love her, as it has been seen,  
She's the soldier's preserver, they call her their queen,  
May God give her strength, & her heart never fail,  
One of Heaven's best gifts is Miss Nightingale.

The wives of the wounded how thankful are they,  
Their husbands are car'd for, how happy are they,  
Whate'er her country, this gift God has given.  
The soldiers they say she's an angel from Heaven  
Sing praise to this woman, and deny it who can!  
And all women was sent for the comfort of man,  
Let's hope no more against them you'll rail,  
Treat them well, and they'll prove like Miss Nightingale.

We learn from the trade that no ballad of the day  
has been so popular as the above, and our own  
observation would lead us to believe the statement.  
We see it every day exhibited at all the temples and  
shrines of the street-muse; in the window of the  
cheap-toy and confectionary warehouse; in company  
with hard-bake, paper-kites, and theatrical portraits;  
and fluttering in the wind among the broadsides of  
the al fresco ballad-monger. Our own copy was bought  
from an old fellow, whom we found in Tottenham  
Court Road one cold evening last winter, doling out  
the words in a sort of recitative to a large and  
attentive audience; and the way in which, at the end  
of each verse, the halfpence came in, and the copies  
went out, shewed how the writer had expressed the  
sentiments of his public. For our part, we do not  
mind admitting that we would like to know the honest  
fellow who wrote these lines—for an honest fellow we  
will believe him, not heeding the sinister suggestion,  
that his fervour is a pretence, and his sentiment made  
up for the market; and glad we are to find that, among  
the dwellers in courts and alleys, there are those who  
can write, and those who can enjoy, manly and whole-  
some poetry. We use the word advisedly, for, be it  
remembered, 'poetry' is no more a definite term than  
'sugar': there is 'moist-brown' as well as 'crushed-  
lump,' and the saccharine properties are present in each.  
A man may be unable to appreciate Milton and 'Best-  
loaf-at-sevenspence,' but it does not follow, therefore,  
that he drinks his cup of life unsweetened. That which  
is coarse and unrefined to another, may suit exactly  
his requirements and taste, and possibly be all the more  
acceptable to his palate because it lacks that refine-  
ment which the more highly educated organ finds  
necessary. There is no disguising the fact, that the  
fashionable poetry of the time is not for the con-  
sumers of moist sugar; still, these latter have a  
something in lieu thereof; and when we find that  
something sound and healthy in its tone, let us not

be hard about an uncouth rhyme, or a syllable more  
or less.

After this dissertation on poetry and sugar, a 'gentle  
tale of love and languishment' will be a fitting refresh-  
ment, and such a one we have in

#### 'THE BALTIC LOVERS.'

In Southampton City a damsel pretty,  
A rich merchant's daughter as you shall hear  
Did fall in love with a brisk young sailor,  
Who had engaged with Sir Charles Napier,  
To sail with him to the war in Turkey,  
And leave behind him this maiden sweet,  
He said my darling we must be parting,  
I'm bound to go with the Baltic fleet.

#### CHORUS.

Young men and maidens attend I pray then,  
It's of a damsel and her Jack Tar,  
A merchant's daughter who follow'd after,  
Her jolly sailor to the Turkish war.

As they were walking and sweetly talking,  
While tears were falling from her eyes bright  
And the British fleet was so proudly sailing,  
Between Southampton & the isle of Wight:  
If you deceive me, she cried and leave me,  
After my darling I soon will steer,  
I will dress myself in sailors attire,  
And join the fleet with Sir Charles Napier.

He said, my Mary, my charming fairy,  
Are you deranged or what can you mean?  
On board the Wellington you know I've enter'd  
To fight the Russians and serve my Queen:  
She said, dear Thomas you did me promise,  
You would not leave me in accents sweet,  
And if you leave me, I'll not deceive thee,  
But sail with you in the Baltic fleet.

Her cruel father did watch these lovers,  
With two policemen as we are told,  
And on the beach seized his lovely daughter,  
And tore her from her young sailor bold.  
Then in a garret he did confine her,  
On bread and water by day and night,  
But she escaped and broke thro' a window,  
And went to Portsmouth in great delight.

Observe how the sterling metal of the poet's soul  
shines out here. In the noble simplicity of his heart,  
he cannot credit the extreme baseness of the father:  
he gives it as a matter of hearsay that the lovers were  
watched in the manner described; had it been with  
a telescope, he would have believed it, but with two  
policemen—viz *credibile nefas*.

She drest herself in sailors clothing,  
Jacket and trousers this damsel sweet,  
To the rendezvous then away she hasten'd,  
And boldly enter'd for the Baltic fleet.  
With other sailors from Portsmouth Harbour,  
Unto the Duke of Wellington on board did steer  
This lovely maiden and female sailor,  
Commanded by brave Charley Napier.

'Ere she departed quite broken-hearted,  
Her father died full of pain and grief,  
And out of measure left all his treasure,  
To the female hero of the Baltic fleet.  
But lovely Mary did do her duty,  
Her pretty hands daub'd with pitch and tar,  
All eyes on board gazed on this sweet beauty,  
As they were sailing to the Turkish war.

One lovely morning the fleet had warning,  
To fight the Russians at seven bells,  
And her true lover did her discover,  
And met his Mary at the Dardanelles.  
Young Thomas raved & appear'd quite frantic,  
And from Mary's eyes stream'd large briny tears,  
To the quarter deck they both were taken,  
And the secret told to Sir Charles Napier.

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Old Charley said, you are an angel,  
 You are an angel I plainly see,  
 You love your Queen and you love a sailor,  
 And soon made happy you both shall be;  
 Your passions smother embrace each other,  
 You together shall to Old England steer,  
 The sailors smiled while the two fond lovers,  
 Sang, God save the Queen and Sir Charley Napier.

Now in a mansion near to Southampton,  
 Dwells Tom, and Mary his lovely bride,  
 With sweet emotion they view the ocean  
 And behold the ships on the silvery tide:  
 While time is rolling they've no controlling  
 Tom loves his Mary his wife so sweet,  
 In every weather they sing together,  
 God save sir Charles and the Baltic fleet.

While in the frame of mind which the above naturally induces, and with its music still in our ears, we cannot be expected to return to such ungenial themes as bloodshed or politics. Besides, even now while we write, the bells are pealing merrily on every side, ringing out two years of war: ringing in, who knows how many, of peace, and they seem to say with Mrs Malaprop, 'No delusions to the past.' Of the peace, *esto perpetua* would be a vain and impolitic wish; but we will say, and with all possible respect and affection for the writers, may it be long before we are enabled to make up such another bundle of war-ballads as that which now lies beside us.

#### EXPERIMENTS ON THE GENERATION OF INSECTS.

THE belief in the generation of insects from putrid animal matter, which is now confined, if it exist at all, to the most illiterate, prevailed universally amongst the learned down nearly to the close of the seventeenth century. How it came to be exploded, it is our present purpose to relate.

There lived in Florence, about the year 1680, a physician of the name of Francesco Redi,\* who was led by circumstances, which it is unnecessary to recount, to question the truth of the prevalent opinion. In order, therefore, to put it to the test of experiment, he caused three snakes, of a species which he calls *Angui d'Esculopio*, to be killed, and put into an open box. The snakes were soon covered with small maggots, which daily increased both in size and numbers; they were all shaped alike, being conical, but their dimensions varied considerably. Having consumed the flesh of the reptiles in an amazingly short time, they all succeeded in escaping unobserved through the fissures of the box, leaving the naked bones of the snakes in a corner. In further prosecution of his experiment, Redi had other three snakes killed, and put into a box as before. In a few days, they were peopled with maggots of the same shape as the former; but some, smaller than the rest, were inclined to a flesh-colour; while the others were entirely white. Having devoured the snakes, they anxiously tried to escape; but as Redi had taken more care than before to secure all the outlets from the box, they were unable to effect their purpose. Gradually, therefore, they became more quiet, and after some time lay motionless, as if asleep. Shrinking into themselves, they imperceptibly began to take the form of eggs; by the twentieth day they had all assumed that shape. At first, the seeming eggs were of a white colour, but by slow degrees they became first golden, and then red. Some remained of the latter colour; but the rest continued to grow darker and darker, till they became quite black; while, from being

soft and tender, their skins had changed to the hard and brittle shell of the chrysalis or pupa. On examining both species more closely, Redi found that the black eggs were more strongly marked than the red, which were nearly smooth. At the end of eight days, the latter burst, and from each chrysalid issued a fly of a dull ash colour, 'turbid, dismayed, and, so to speak, wrinkled, unfinished,' and with wings unfolded; but in the space of half an hour, it had dilated its little body, expanded its wings, 'and, relinquishing the sad ash colour, became dressed in a vivid green, marvelously brilliant. It was now so much larger than before, that it seemed impossible to conceive how its little shell could have contained it.' In fourteen days, some of the black chrysalids burst, and produced a larger fly, 'black, marked with white, hairy on the abdomen, and red at the nether end, such as daily frequent butchers' shops, or any place where there is dead flesh.'

The important fact, that one kind of meat should produce two kinds of flies, so antagonistic to the dogmas of the age, stimulated the experimentalist to fresh exertions. Instead, therefore, of only one kind, he put many kinds into different boxes, and obtained the same results as before, except that the different species of insects were more numerous.

He next put some skinned river-frogs into a glass vessel, which he left open. On the following day, he found them covered with maggots, some sporting in the fetid liquor that had distilled from the frogs, while the others revelled on the carcasses themselves. On the third day, they had all disappeared, leaving nothing of the frogs but the bones.

Some fish from the Arno were the next victims to Redi's inquisitive spirit, and these also were soon peopled; but on the fish, and on the sides of the box in which the fish were placed, he discovered not only maggots, but also some very small eggs, which, when crushed between the nails, gave forth 'a white subtle fluid,' clearer and less viscous than the white of birds' eggs. By the twentieth day, they were all hatched; and the maggots had increased to twice their original size, weighing from twenty-five to thirty to the grain; but on the twenty-first day, they were so amazingly enlarged as to weigh about seven grains each. Meanwhile, they continued to devour the fish, finally leaving nothing but the bones, and these 'as white and clean as if they had just come from the hand of the most delicate anatomist in Europe.'

Having taken means to prevent their escape, which they all attempted, Redi watched their gradual progress towards perfection. The perfect insects were of five kinds—four of them he had seen before; the fifth, a little black fly, greatly exceeding in numbers the number of its pupae, which were black and large, he had never observed till then. Seeing this curious disproportion between the number of the pupae and the number of flies, he opened one or two of the former, and found that they contained, upon an average, from twenty-five to thirty flies, but never more than forty.

After this, he made many more experiments—on lions' and tigers' flesh, and on various species of fish, flesh, and fowl, cooked and raw, and found that the insects were promiscuously produced on all kinds of meat; and, indeed, one piece would sometimes contain all the species he had discovered; and he generally observed not only maggots, but eggs.

These experiments strengthened the opinion he had been at first inclined to entertain, that the eggs were deposited on the meat by flies similar to those which they produced, instead of being generated by the putrid mass; and he was the more confirmed in this opinion, from finding invariably that flies resembling those afterwards engendered in the flesh alighted upon it previously to the appearance of the maggots: 'but

\* He died in 1697.

vain,' he adds, 'would have been the doubt, if experience had not resolved it.'

In order that he might, if possible, do this, he put into four wide-necked flasks a snake, some river-fish, some eels from the Arno, and some veal, and covered the mouths of the flasks with paper tied on tightly and sealed. Four other flasks containing similar meats he left open.

In a few days, the fish and meat in the open flasks were, as usual, covered with maggots; but in the closed flasks, the flesh, although putrid, was entirely free from them, although on the outside of the paper he found a few, as well as several clusters of eggs—the former having used, and still using, every endeavour to enter. After this, Redi made many similar experiments, and always found that uncovered meats in a short time teemed with life; while, on the contrary, those that had no communication with the external air, corrupted, but never verminated.

During the course of these experiments, he ascertained the curious fact, that when the common fly dies, it serves as a nest for its own species, equally with any other kind of dead flesh.

Not yet satisfied, Redi determined on making a new experiment. He put some fish and flesh into a large vessel covered with very fine gauze. This vessel he then put into a large box covered with a similar gauze, so that the air might penetrate to the meats, while the intrusion of insects should be prevented. On these meats he did not see a single maggot, but frequently observed the little creatures writhing about on the outer gauze, trying to make their way through; and it was with difficulty that, on one occasion, he succeeded in preventing two, which had got half through the inner gauze, from falling upon the meat. He also noticed flies, attracted by the exhalations of the meat, and unable to make their way to it, drop their eggs upon the gauze; some of them lighting on it, others hovering in the air during the operation; and he also noticed that each deposited six or seven eggs at a time. This was the point he wished to attain; and he had now discovered that insects supposed to be engendered by corruption were, in reality, propagated by their own species.

Notwithstanding this discovery, the belief in the spontaneous generation of insects in the body of living men and animals seems to have remained undisturbed till quite a recent period. The writers who have thrown most light upon the subject are Von Liebold, Küchenmeister, Goodsir, Owen, Quekett, Dr Allen Thomson, and now Dr T. Herbert Barker, in the case he has just published of cystic entozoa in the human kidney.\* These entozoa, it appears, although apparently different species of animals, including the cysticercus, cœnurus, and echinococcus, are merely different early stages of the mature entozoa [intestinal worms], of which the common tape-worm is the best illustration; and they all arise from there having been taken into the body some larvae or ova, the various resulting developments 'being subject to certain fixed laws of transformation, which are at once as interesting to the pathologist as to the natural historian.'

The curious transformations of the ova when introduced into the bodies of animals are established by direct experiment. Küchenmeister found that 'when young dogs were made to eat along with their food a number of the cysticercus pisiformis, so common in the rabbit, the entozoa produced were converted in a few weeks into the tœnia serrata. He also found that by giving the cœnurus cerebri of a sheep to a dog, the same result ensued. Thirdly—and this is the most telling experiment with regard to the human subject—he gave a number of cysticerci, taken from the hog and rabbit, to a condemned criminal, at periods varying from one

hundred and thirty to twelve hours before execution. After death, a number of young tœniæ in different stages of development were found in the intestines. After proving his position so far, the same experimentalist varied his experiment. Having produced a tœnia serrata in a dog by feeding it with the cœnurus, he caused lambs to take the tœnia joints, and obtained, in the short space of eighteen days, a development of the cœnurus in the brain, in the muscles, and under the skin of these animals.' Von Liebold performed similar experiments. From the entozoic larvæ he produced a development of the tape-worm, which in the course of two months attained the length of from ten to twelve inches; and, in like manner, by the administration of the tœnia-heads, he produced cystic entozoa.

Dr Thomson is of opinion that in the human subject the tœnia is produced by swallowing the larvæ of the scolox with the food, the common source of which animal is the cysticercus cellulosa of mealy pork. Upon the whole, the probabilities are, that all such diseases will be found, when science has advanced further in this direction, to have a dietetic origin.

## THE KRIS.\*

FROM THE GERMAN.

BATAVIA is a city of warehouses, huge stores, merchants' offices, and buildings of a description which might be expected to exist in the capital of Java, that great emporium of Dutch commerce in the East. It is situated on the small river Jacatra, along whose banks, at some short distance from the town, are built picturesque houses, villas, and cottages, to whose gardens and verandas the weary merchants retire after the labours of the day.

The great point of attraction to-day, to the crowd which usually thronged the principal thoroughfares of the city, seemed to be a large building situated about the centre of the High Street; in front were erected a number of booths, and in and out of these, and amongst the carriages and conveyances of all descriptions, a number of Chinese and Javanese fruit-venders made their way, offering for sale their fragrant and juicy merchandise. In the large gloomy building itself, a public auction was going on; not of imported European wares, damaged goods, or of inland produce, such as was often held there, but of a collection of curiosities, the property of a German gentleman lately deceased, whose effects were now to be sold.

In and out of the spacious rooms went the noisy, careless crowd, staring at the accumulated treasures, few knowing how to appreciate their value. Two white men, one a Dutch captain lately arrived in port, the other an American merchant, resident many years in Batavia, were making their way with some difficulty, in order to obtain a nearer view of the articles for sale. They at length reached a table covered with a variety of weapons, especially 'krieses.' At this moment, a Frenchman also approached, and requested that these might be the next articles put up for sale; which was accordingly done, and he purchased many at tolerably high prices. Some among them were very handsome, being inlaid with gold and precious stones; others simple or rudely carved, the sheaths made of wood, and occasionally ornamented with feathers. A native Javanese, who stood near, attentively examined each kris, drawing them from their scabbards, but did not bid for any; and as soon as the Frenchman had moved

\* Hamilton, Adams, & Co. London: 1856.

\* A Malay weapon.

off with his purchases, appearing to have satisfied his curiosity, he drew his *sarong*, or cloak, more closely about him, and also quitted the room.

A minute or two afterwards, the Chinaman, in arranging the other things on the table from which the kris had been taken, discovered one which had accidentally remained hidden, and laid it before the auctioneer.

'Here is just one more dagger,' exclaimed the latter; 'who will bid for it? Our purchaser for these things is unfortunately gone. We will commence, say, with thirty florins. It is a beautiful weapon, the handle set with garnets; and what a splendid blade!—it is worth at least one hundred florins.' The Dutch captain, after several bids by others, at length secured the article at eighty-seven florins. He seemed, however, to care little for his purchase, stuck it in his pocket, watched the progress of the sale some short time longer, then hooking his arm within that of his companion, left the close, hot atmosphere of the crowded room for the open air.

'One ought never to go into an auction-room unless with the purpose of buying something one really requires,' observed he to the American, drawing out and looking at his dagger. 'I was so determined before going in not to part with my good money, and here have I allowed myself to be tempted into buying this thing. I am richer by a piece of iron, and poorer by eighty-seven florins.'

His companion took it in his hand, and said laughingly: 'My dear fellow, what has just occurred to you, happens every day; and you and I are among the last who ought to wish it otherwise. Why, what on earth would become of all trade and commerce if people restricted themselves to buying only necessities? By the way, the kris is an indispensable article in a Javanese family: some are handed down as heir-looms, and the owners would prefer starvation to parting with them for any sum, so great is the superstition regarding them. However, during the late war, many of them came into possession of the whites; and some of the chiefs have been known to give enormous sums to reclaim these Penates, on discovering them in the hands of strangers.'

'I say, Goodwin,' laughed the captain, 'I wish one of those chiefs would take a fancy to my kris; I would willingly part with it for a reasonable percentage.'

'Why, there stands one, I declare,' replied his friend: 'if I am not mistaken, the very one who in the auction-room was so closely examining the weapons bought by the Frenchman; he at least can tell us the real worth of this knife, and you can ascertain whether you have made a good bargain. Hallo! friend, come here and tell us how you like this kris.'

The person thus addressed was a tall, statly young man, who leaned carelessly against a stone pillar not far off: he might be from twenty-two to twenty-four years of age, dark-skinned; his noble features and brilliant eyes bespeaking him a Javanese, who, in these respects, varied much from the inhabitants of some of the other islands. However servile in general his countrymen might be, this young man apparently formed an exception, for he took no notice of the words addressed to him, though he must have heard them, but turned away his head, after a rapid and not very amicable look at the two strangers.

'Ho! ho! my boy, independent, eh?' laughed the

Yankee. 'I guess we must go to him, if we want to obtain our information.'

'Here, friend,' he continued in Malay, taking the kris and approaching the Javanese, 'can you tell me what this here article may be worth?'

The latter contracted his brows, drew himself up with a proud, almost defiant aspect, and appeared about to walk away without reply, when suddenly his eye fell on the kris; his arm was involuntarily stretched towards it, the blood mounted to his face, and he fixed a searching look on the face of the stranger, as if to read his intention. This lasted but a moment; his arm was again folded within his *sarong*, and he resumed his former position: his look alone remained fixed on the weapon; and the American had to repeat his question before he seemed to comprehend.

'I do not know,' he at length replied, turning his head gloomily on one side; 'it is an old kris. Is it your wish to sell it?'

Without giving an answer, the Yankee, a long resident in Java, and well acquainted with the manners and customs of the natives, turned towards his companion and said in Dutch: 'I say, old boy, I guess the younker here knows more about the kris than he would have us believe, and therefore pretends great indifference; and now, I look at him, I reckon he is not one of the common sort, as I first thought: he wears a valuable *sarong*, and his cap is embroidered with gold. Hum! if he means to have the knife, I guess he will have to pay for it.'

Whilst all this, which was unintelligible to him, was being said, the Javanese looked from one to the other, without, however, altering his position, and when the American stopped, seemed about to repeat his question, but changed his mind, and remained silent.

'Do not ask too much,' suggested the owner of the knife, 'for it may frighten him out of buying it, if he has any intention of the sort.'

'Don't you be anxious,' replied his friend. 'Either he is bent on possessing the kris—in which case we may demand any price—or he does not care a straw for it, which last, however, I do not believe. At all events, we can find out the state of the case—only let me manage him.' Then turning to the young man, he at the same time drew out the dagger, and shewed it off to great advantage, the bright blade and jewels glittering in the sun. 'Cannot you at least tell us what such a thing could be made for in your part of the world—or perhaps it comes from one of the other islands?'

Slowly the Javanese stretched out his hand for the kris: giving only one glance at the handle, he fixed an approving eye on the chasing of the steel blade, and then gave it back without otherwise shewing he took any particular interest in the weapon.

'Well, what is it worth?' asked the Dutchman impatiently.

'Fifty florins would pay for the materials and workmanship.'

'Fifty florins!' exclaimed the owner in Dutch. 'The deuce take all auctions, for I have thrown thirty-seven florins to the dogs. I say, Goodwin, you were rather mistaken in supposing our friend there wanted to purchase.'

'Well, I'll be sworn at first he mistook the kris for another; but there's no harm done. It is a good and well-finished specimen of the sort of thing, and for which you will always get your price in the old country.' And without taking any further notice of the native, they turned away, and were about to move off, when the Javanese said quietly: 'Is it your wish to sell the kris?'

'Yes,' answered the Yankee, turning half round, 'provided we get a good price for it.'

'And what do you call a good price?'



'Ask a hundred florins,' said Hoffman, who understood a few words of Malay.

All this time the young Javanese had been getting impatient, and, thinking they had not understood his question, he repeated it.

'Say what you will give,' answered the American, once more producing the knife and then repocketing it. 'I have but just bought it, and feel no anxiety to part with it just yet.'

'Was it sold up there?' asked the native, pointing to the auction-room. 'I did not see it there.'

'Ha! ha! he was looking for it, eh? I say, Hoffman, that remark of his will cost him something, I reckon.—Well,' turning to the Javanese, he continued in Malay, 'what will you give?'

'The kris is worth fifty florins; I will give that sum.'

'And I gave eighty-seven,' broke in the Dutch captain.

'Now, Hoffman, don't be impatient, my good fellow.—Friend, you know that is an absurd price. Why, for that you would hardly get the sheath. You must put several similar sums together, if you wish to possess the kris—you must offer more.'

The chief did not seem inclined to do so; and it was only as the white men were turning away, apparently with the intention of going, he asked slowly: 'And what may you have given for it?'

'That's neither here nor there; though it was more than you seem to fancy.'

'I'll give you seventy-five.'

'That's not enough yet,' replied the American. The Javanese again asked to look at the kris, examined it minutely, especially the tracing on the blade, and then bid 100 florins.

The Yankee well knew his business, and drew on his customer without himself naming any price, till he had made him offer first 200, and then 300 florins. Here the Dutchman interfered, and wished the bargain to be concluded, being perfectly satisfied with the profit he should make on his purchase; but his friend informed him he intended the youth to bid as many thousands as he had done hundreds, and even then he did not know whether he should let him have it.

'But that is madness, Goodwin.'

'Your notion, not mine,' answered the American.

'Then,' continued Hoffman, 'he will at last refuse to give anything, and I shall have the thing on my hands.'

'Oh,' replied the other, 'if that is what you fear, I'll give you the three hundred florins; and whatever more I can get out of him will be mine.'

'Willingly. I would rather have nothing more to do with the affair.'

'Done!' exclaimed the Yankee.

'Do you accept the three hundred florins?' asked the Javanese, biting his lip, and casting a gloomy look on the whites. 'I know the family who once owned this kris, and I would wish, if possible, to return it to them.'

'You have not yet proposed to give my price,' replied Goodwin, shaking his head.

'Name your price!' almost shouted the Javanese, and impatiently stamping his foot.

'Well, would you like to expend three thousand florins on this bit of steel?'—and the American turned away, not caring to look the Javanese in the face.

'White man,' replied the latter, through his hard-set teeth, 'you are dreaming. But I will give you one thousand, and you will then have received twenty times its value.'

'Ha! ha!' sneered the Yankee. 'Such a sum would make me neither rich nor poor; but I see you have no love for bargaining, so let's end the matter;' and turning away, he and his companion walked off.

'And you won't let him have the thing at a thousand

florins!' exclaimed Hoffman. 'Why, I think you ought to be satisfied with having made seven hundred florins in five minutes.'

'It's not so bad, I reckon,' replied Goodwin. 'But fortune in this instance has favoured us: that fellow yonder must have the kris, and I may secure any sum for it.'

'Must buy it? Who can force him to do so?'

'The custom of his country, which I told you of before. I was once present when a Javanese chief paid two thousand florins for one with a good enough blade, but the handle of no value; and he would have given more rather than not have secured it. This is a similar case, or the youth would never have bid a thousand florins. Had he been on his guard, he might have got it for one hundred—for of what use can one make of it, but hang it against the wall; but now he has let the cat out of the bag, see if I don't squeeze the fellow hard!'

'Take care he does not leave you in the lurch,' replied his friend; 'but, independently of this, I feel for the poor man; if the kris once belonged to his family, and his heart is set on having it again in his possession, why make it so confoundedly hard? I declare, I don't think it is just.'

'O never mind the dog, I hate his very colour, and he gives himself so many airs; he and his fellows never lose an opportunity of cheating us, and, when the game is in our hands, why should we not take advantage of it? Besides this, the Dutch government not only feed and support the lazy drones, but in many cases pay an extravagant salary, which they waste in trinkets and useless finery for their numberless wives—why, it is only one's duty to get some of it from them.'

'Well, only take care you never hear of him again, as you refused his last offer.'

'There he comes already,' laughed the Yankee; 'and I'm convinced he will be on my track till the knife is his; and as the two men were turning the corner of the bridge they had crossed, they observed him following.'

The young chief had remained on the same spot for some minutes after the others had left him, expecting them to return; but finding they did not do so, he followed quickly, keeping them in sight. The American had rightly guessed that the dagger had belonged to his family, and this the native had also discovered on examining the peculiar characters traced on the blade, and get it back into his possession he must—but how? The ambitious and grasping whites had robbed him of all he held most precious; he was now almost a beggar and a wanderer on the very spot where his fathers had ruled as princes. He well knew that, in consequence of his former position, he was watched and looked upon with suspicion by the government; he had had much influence among his own people, and, besides this, had obstinately refused to follow the example of some of his equals, and quietly submit to the rule of strangers. His horse, a beautiful creature, and a handful of jewels, were all he could now call his own; but even the immediate sale of these would hardly realise the sum demanded by the avaricious white; and then, what would remain to him? Brooding thus, he followed the two men, who, without appearing to take any further notice of him, stopped before one of the stores on the quay, their backs still towards him. The American had just handed over the 300 florins for which he had bought the weapon from the captain, and was looking at the knife with a contemptuous air, when the Javanese, who had approached, laid his hand on his shoulder, and said softly:

'I will give you two thousand florins and a better kris than this; let me have it—I have set my heart on possessing it; and, even if it is a whim, I must gratify it.'



'You are a persevering bidder,' laughed the American; 'but my heart is also in the affair, and we must now see which of our wills is the strongest: you cannot have it for two thousand florins.'

The young man bit his nether lip; he now knew the stranger had found out the hard necessity he was under of obtaining the kris, at whatever sacrifice, and intended to take advantage of his position to extort the sum of money; he told him he would beggar him if he persisted in his demand: all in vain. No choice was now left him—the prized relic of his forefathers was in the possession of a stranger, and their spirits would revenge themselves on him should he allow it to remain so.

'Then, so it must be,' and he heaved a long-drawn sigh. 'Be here at this spot an hour before sunset, and I will bring you the money.' And without another word he drew his sarong close round him, and strode away.

The American gave a glance of triumph at the captain, but the latter did not share his feelings, and said earnestly: 'Goodwin, you have gone too far; the poor fellow will find it difficult enough to get the money; and, had I known what has now come out, I would not have allowed the transaction.'

'I quite believe you!' returned the other. 'But he won't get it even for that.'

'Not get it for three thousand florins!'

'No; and he will give me more, the haughty fellow, now I have him in my power. I'll squeeze his last florin out of him; such an opportunity won't offer again in a hurry. I should be an idiot not to take advantage of it.'

'I tell you what, Goodwin,' answered his friend seriously; 'I like to make money as well as you, and I need it as much as most people; but in this manner!—'

'Bah!' interrupted the American, turning away; 'you have taken more than two hundred per cent. for your money, and I intend making my thousands: the only difference between us lies in the amount. It is absurd to pretend to allow qualms of conscience to interfere. But let us drop the subject. When do you go on board, for you know I still have some goods to send to the ship?'

'At sunset. My papers are all in order, the wind is favourable, and there is nothing to prevent my setting sail to-morrow morning.'

'By the way,' continued the American, 'you promised to sell me another set of the chessmen you brought from China.'

'They are at your service; but I have none on shore.'

'I will accompany you on board this evening, and fetch it; and now I must be off, for I have some business on hand.'

They then separated; and we will now follow the young Javanese chief, who hastened, after leaving the white men, to his temporary abode in the city, collected his few jewels, and, leading his much-loved steed from his stable, proceeded to dispose of both. This he found no easy matter to accomplish in a short time; and at length had to part with them below their value, with difficulty obtaining the sum named by the American. In breathless haste, and the drops of perspiration falling from his brow, he returned to the spot where he had appointed the meeting. Goodwin was there before him, walking up and down by the river-side.

'Have you the kris?' asked the Javanese eagerly, taking the roll of bank-notes from his belt.

'Ah, my brown friend, there you are at last. A minute or two later, you would not have found me.'

'Have you the kris?' again asked the chief, without attending to the observation of the other.

'The kris—of course, it is here.'

'And here is your money; give it me;' and he extended his hand for it, offering the notes with the other.

'Hold!—not quite so fast,' answered the Yankee calmly. 'How much have you there?'

'What you demanded—three thousand florins,' replied the Javanese, knitting his brows: 'it has been hard enough to obtain it.'

'Possibly,' returned his tormentor; 'but I don't mean to part with the knife for three thousand florins.'

'Did you not sell it me for that sum?' cried the young chief, his eyes flashing, and, with his right hand, trying to grasp the weapon.

'Softly,' replied the other, thwarting his intention, and giving a contemptuous laugh. 'I only asked you if you had any wish to give three thousand florins, but I did not tell you you should have it for that sum: but give four thousand, and it is yours.'

'Four thousand!' shouted the enraged Javanese, grinding his teeth. 'The clothes I wear are all I possess: I have not a thousand cents to add to what I have offered.'

'I am sorry for that: then I fear I shall have to keep the kris,' said the American, shrugging his shoulders.

'The kris is mine!' hissed the native from between his clenched teeth: 'you dare not keep it from me! Here is your money—it is my all, but I do not grudge it you, and will even thank you for the relic of my ancestors.'

'Hum; I thought you only wanted it for a friend,' sneered the Yankee. 'Had I before known what has just escaped you, you should not have had it for four thousand; but I have passed my word, and you shall have it for that sum, but not one farthing less.'

'Give me the kris, and take your money,' urged the excited youth. 'By Allah, I can give you no more!—don't drive me to extremity.'

'Where you got the three thousand, you will, no doubt, be able to procure the fourth. That's all I have to say; and now leave me, for I am going on board one of the vessels in the harbour. If you can get the money, you may bring it to-morrow morning to the Amsterdam Hotel.'

'And you positively refuse to give it me for these three thousand florins?' said the Javanese, in a choked, husky voice.

The American thought the game was now secure, and, taking no further notice of his victim, walked away. At a short distance, a carriage was waiting: the coachman, in a showy livery, as soon as he saw his master approaching, drove to meet him. Goodwin slowly got in, and turned to take another look at the Javanese; but the latter had already disappeared, and he drove off, reflecting with inward satisfaction on the profitable bargain he was making.

On arriving at the canal which led to the harbour, and which was covered with boats, he could nowhere discover the one belonging to his friend, and for some time he strode impatiently up and down the bank. Soon a small skiff was seen descending the stream, rowed by four natives, while a fifth lay at the bottom, wrapped in an old sarong. It stopped at the custom-house to have its freight examined, but was not detained long, as it contained only some bananas, coconuts, two baskets of rice, and other articles of food. As it was about to move off, the official who had examined it asked in an indignant tone, pointing to the native at the bottom of the boat, why he did not shew more respect when passing the custom-house, and sit up. 'He is ill,' replied his companions, and immediately rowed quickly away.

The American had seen what passed, but took little notice of it; and at length the expected boat arriving with the captain, he got on board. As it only contained some necessary provisions for the ship they

were going to, they were soon clear of the custom-house. On their way towards the harbour, they passed the boat with the five Javanese; the sick one retaining the same position, and the others seeming to take it very coolly, letting their boat drift down with the current.

The sun was now setting. Goodwin remained on board the Dutch vessel for some hours, waiting the turn of the tide and the rising of the moon. The captain, in the course of conversation, asked the result of the interview with the young chief, but he received an evasive answer; and soon after the American took leave of him, and quitted the ship, accompanied by two Malays, to return to Batavia. The wind being contrary, they had to take to their oars, Goodwin steering. The moon shone brightly, and danced on the rippling water; the boats, which were engaged all day in conveying stores to the different vessels, were now assembled in the canal, except a few of equivocal appearance, probably smugglers. One of these was now approaching the American's, but so softly and swiftly that he did not observe it until a collision had nearly taken place, and which he only prevented by a dexterous turn of the rudder. 'Hallo!' he shouted; 'what are you about there, you blockheads; keep clear, will you?' But the boat did not alter its course, and followed close on the other, until it made a sudden dart alongside; a dark form sprang on board, and made towards Goodwin, while two others held the boats locked together.

'We are met once more,' said a deep voice, whose tone made Goodwin shudder. He had just time to draw the kris from his pocket, but not unsheath it, when the Javanese chief—for it was he—threw himself upon him, and clutched the knife.

'Murder! murder! help!' shouted the now helpless Yankee.

'I have come for the kris, and have it I will,' said the Javanese, in a calm determined voice. 'Give it me, or you are a dead man.'

The American, infuriated, exclaimed: 'You scoundrel, I'll part with my life first. Wait, you brown beast, see if I don't make you pay for this insolence!' and he called on his Malays to help him to bind the 'villain;' but these seemed 'paralysed with terror, and moved neither hand nor foot.'

At this moment, the practised ear of the chief distinguished the distant sound of oars approaching; and at the same instant Goodwin again shouted for help. The Javanese in a deep hoarse whisper said: 'Then take your fate,' and the next moment a long, sharp cry of agony pierced through the silence of the night. The Javanese sprang into his own boat, followed by his companions, the oars were seized, and it quickly disappeared.

'Hallo!' shouted a loud voice, from a boat coming in an opposite direction. 'What boat is that?' But perceiving the fugitive was making ahead of them, and receiving no intelligible answer from the Malays, they followed in pursuit. Soon after another boat appearing, the officer of the guard-boat, which had been sent out on the cries for help reaching the ship, requested it might return and look after the American.

As soon as the Javanese saw that he was followed, the oars were abandoned and sails were hoisted: this occasioned the delay of a minute or two, and allowed the pursuer to approach nearer, when a voice from the latter shouted: 'Down with your sails, or I fire.'

'Fire away!' was the prompt answer; at the same moment the young chief seized the helm, every inch of canvas filled with the breeze, and away flew the light skiff, dashing the spray from its bows. Three or four shots were fired, but failed in reaching it. For two hours the pursuit continued; at the end of that time, as the boats were approaching the Thousand Islands, and knowing he would have no chance if

once within their intricate channels, the officer of the guard-boat gave up the chase and returned.

The boat which had returned to the assistance of the American arrived too late—the Malays were bending over the corpse of their master.

## MATERIAL AND INTELLECTUAL LIFE IN BRUSSELS.

TRAVELLERS who recollect what Brussels was a few years ago, would scarcely recognise now the southern part of the town. The fields, gardens, and villas have given way to the Quartier Leopold, composed of splendid mansions, some of them not very felicitous reproductions of the architecture of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The houses of this new quarter are in internal construction on the French plan, with *porte cochère* and stable in the court behind. The rent of one of those handsome mansions is about £200 sterling; that is to say, a third or two-fifths less than corresponding accommodation in London. The ordinary three-window self-contained house is from £50 to £100.

Living is, upon the whole, less costly than in England. Butchers' meat, for instance, until lately, used to be one-third below the English price. British prices have not fallen to the old low continental standard, but continental prices have risen, because they are regulated by the average of the universal demand. The cheap district of Belgium is the Ardennes, where there are no railways to carry the superfluous provisions away; but when the Luxembourg Railway is carried into the Ardennes, a tendency to equalisation must take place. In most countries, the capital is the dearest locality; but in Belgium, provisions in Antwerp are dearer than in Brussels, because the former port is, as regards transport, subject to the more powerful attraction of London.

The difference which exists between the British and the Brussels price of provisions is now just the amount of carriage and profit on passing through an additional mercantile hand. The advantage to the British resident is in luxuries and conveniences. Coach-hire, milliners' bills, and other heavy items of London family-life, are more reasonable, from the place being smaller. The husband of moderate means can from time to time treat his family to a sumptuous restaurant dinner in town or country, without going to the extravagant price of Richmond Hill or Greenwich. The Opera-house is the property of the town; and the manager being not only rent-free, but receiving in addition an allowance of £5000 per annum, admissions to the best places may be had for three or four shillings. The dramatic theatres open their doors at a considerably lower tariff.

The dramatic theatres of the Vaudeville and St Hubert are certainly a delightful resource, where one has the best Paris pieces done by a constant succession of Paris actors on starring trips. The wit, ingenuity, and naturalness of the good pieces of Molière, Scribe, and Bayard, with the measure and finesse of the performance, present a complete contrast to the flat, borrowed stuff of our modern British playwrights, with buffoonery instead of ease and refined humour in the stage-performance. \* *L'Avare* and *George Dandin* were revived last winter in Brussels, with the costume, architecture, and decorations of the period of Molière, and completely carried the audience along with the actors, in spite of the difference of manners. For myself, I went to the theatre, intending to make an effort to sit out a classical piece written two hundred

\* This characteristic is, of course, inapplicable to such writers as Taylor and Bourcicault, and such an actor as Charles Mathews.

years ago; but at the end of the first scene, I had completely forgotten the age of Louis XIV., and felt immersed in the fun and development of the piece. Molière, like Shakspeare, was an actor himself; hence to this day his pieces are most effective acting-plays.

Scribe has not the deep philosophy and overflowing wisdom that will float Molière so gaily and pleasantly to the end of the stream of time; but he appears to me to surpass in dramatic power every English and French comic writer of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. He is a man of infinite merriment, sound sense, and sterling pathos. None of his pieces coruscate with wit, like the *Double-dealer* or the *School for Scandal*; but the author having taken a broad, bold look at human life, each personage speaks the language of his class, and is not a Congreve-rocket of puns—pardon me this bad one. Madame de Staël said she knew nothing so unlike English life and conversation as some of the most celebrated English comedies. Scribe's *vaudevilles* are pregnant with the gaiety of France and the electricity of nature; but to enjoy them thoroughly, there requires a perfect knowledge of even the demitints of the French language; hence their far higher reputation on the continent than on this side of the Channel.

Our fellow-countrymen run very much after the pieces of Dumas, father and son, which are more striking, and cast in bolder relief. Great fertility of invention and brilliant dialogue cannot be denied to these men; but the mirror is not held up to normal, homely, everyday nature; and instead of the simple pathos of Scribe, we find ourselves in the spurious sensibility of the pigtail German literature of our grandfathers, or amid the clap-traps of the Monk Lewis and Radcliffe school of incident. These pieces are the first of their order; but that order is decidedly the Surrey-side one of dramatic architecture.

In music, the taste of the people of Brussels is for the pieces of that splendid epoch comprising the few years before and after 1830, such as *William Tell*, *Robert the Devil*, *Norma*, and *Massaniello*. The taste for the grand old repertory of Gluck seems to have gone by; many of the best Italian operas are never given. On the other hand, many French operas of that charming school of expression of which Boieldieu and Nicolo are the representatives, and which one never hears in London, are often heard. With the mass of the public, the popular man is Meyerbeer, who has continued and surpassed the school of Mehul and Spontini in its powerful action on the nervous system through wind-instruments; but to the ingenious mosaic of Meyerbeer, the cultivated amateur will always prefer the deeper master-craft of Rossini, which lies not in score or counterpoint, but in that consistent unity of mould which is the highest and most difficult attainment of art.

To an old amateur like ourselves, the most savoury treat was a series of historical concerts got up by M. Fétis, the director of the musical conservatory, who adds vast literary erudition to musical science. Selections were given from all the most remarkable composers of the last centuries, with the instruments of each period. A volume might be written on this most interesting performance; we content ourselves with a couple of dainties of the bill of fare. One piece was a mass by Stradella, whereby hangs a tale. This composer had in 1668 got into some scrape, amorous or political, and two assassins had planned his death on his exit from a church in Naples, after the conclusion of the piece he was directing; but so entranced were they with the beauty of the strains, that they renounced the project, and implored his pardon. It may well be believed that curiosity was highly excited after such an anecdote; but the exquisite tenderness of the piece stood the test of the most extravagant expectation.

Everybody has heard of the music of Lully and of the operas and court-balls of Louis Quatorze; but nobody seems ever to have heard what sort of strains set in motion the Achilles tendons of a Lauzon or a Montespan, in those days when a Racine and a Boileau paced the antechambers of royalty. On hearing them, I at once recognised their pure Arab character, derived, there can be no doubt, by Lully through the Spanish court of Naples, and therefore traceable from the Alhambra of the ill-starred Boabdil to the Versailles of the most splendid of the Bourbons. The Arab dance-music in the days of our English cavaliers is extinct; but the tradition of the dance itself, with its name 'Morris' or 'Moorish,' still lingers at the fairs of the rural districts of England.

In a general article of this description, it is out of our power to enter largely into the subject of the imitative arts in the land of Van Eyck, however interesting it may be. The sense of external beauty is, in the Saxon nations, far lower than what we find in the south of Europe. Vandyck was elegant and truthful in the treatment of single figures; but in professed historical composition, the eye for manners is not enough. Rubens caught the splendour of Paul Veronese, and even Michael Angelo himself has not surpassed him in that higher bravura which consists in vitality of movement; but his coarse exaggeration and slip-slop haste mar our admiration, and cause us perpetually to regret that such surpassing powers should have been scattered over so great a multiplicity of undertakings.

The natural bent of the Flemish genius is, like that of the Dutch, to the literal translation of nature, not to the ideal; and in this, the moderns shew great technical power. In mechanical execution, the cattle-pieces of Verboekhoven equal those of Landseer. The popular scenes of Dekeyser have much of the truth and humour of Teniers and Wilkie. At the head of the marine-painters is Claes, whose master-piece is a scene in Shetland, with its high toppling rocks, raging surf, and labouring ship; and the bleak, drenched aspect, fitful airs, and unearthly sen-fowl of that inhospitable coast. The most eminent of the historical painters is Baron Wappers, late director of the Academy of Antwerp, whose compositions are distinguished by great elegance of form and firmness of handling. The picture that gained the prize at the last annual exhibition was the Judas of M. Thomas, distinguished by great dramatic power. He supposes the spirit-troubled traitor to be wandering in the night preceding the crucifixion, and unconsciously to have alighted on the spot where the carpenters by torch-light were preparing the cross. Judas starts back, conscience-struck, and changes the direction of his walk. In striking and instantaneous effect on the spectator, few pictures of the nineteenth century can be compared with the Judas of M. Thomas.

The press in Belgium is free even beyond English freedom; for although it is a Roman Catholic country, the most blasphemous publications pass without questions asked by the attorney-general, and this on the ground of Christianity having in itself a supreme vital force which stands in no need of the aid of the civil magistrate. The *Indépendance Belge* has the largest circulation, chiefly in France and Russia. I have been told that a separate edition is made up for Russia, different from that circulated in France. The paper is a curious mixture; one correspondence with a strong Russian colour, another with a strong French colour, a tolerably impartial summary as a leading article, and an abundant expenditure for early telegraphic intelligence. Next the *Indépendance* in circulation comes the *Emancipation Belge*, the organ of the moderate Roman Catholics and liberal conservatives, which during the war has been decidedly favourable to



England and France, and decidedly hostile to Russia. The *Journal de Bruxelles* is the extreme or ultra-montane Catholic organ.

At the opposite political pole are the Red Republican organs, conducted with pungent wit, rabid ferocity, and reckless audacity—the *Figaro*, the *Mephistophiles*, and the *Sancho*; but in politics and theology smacking more of Paine than of Panza. This is called '*la petite presse*;' the inspirations of which are not Belgian, but French republican, and which the governments of both France and Belgium would muzzle if they could. In these most scurrilous publications, aristocratic England is abused as roundly as France and Austria, and on the war-question their sympathies are with Russia, because she is opposed to the French Empire.

I once made a droll mistake in meeting one of the collaborateurs of these papers. Happening to sit next a gentleman with crimson stockings in a railway-carriage, I asked him if he was an ecclesiastic; but he answered that he professed no religion, and that his stockings were to shew his politics. Fortunately, these gentry have no power in this highly favoured land.

### NEEDLES.

In these wonderful days of mechanical industry and ingenuity, the accessories, useful and ornamental, of everyday-life are so abundantly produced, and become, therefore, so easy of attainment, that we learn to regard their existence as a matter of course, and to concern ourselves very little about the process and agency through which they attain the form familiar to our eyes; and yet there is no art or manufacture, however lowly and commonplace, which does not present a claim on our attention by its human no less than by its technical interest. With each one is associated a different phase of life, a distinct class of workers, having their own peculiar habits and characteristics—a knowledge of which could scarcely fail to stimulate our social sympathies; and this knowledge cannot be more easily obtained than by inquiry into the details of the occupation, which stamps an especial impress on its followers. There are, for example, very few implements more closely connected with the common experiences of at least half the world than the needle; but there are certainly very many persons owing it heavy obligations—it may be for the means of living—it may be only for the means of amusement—it may be for passing relief in times of heavy care and sorrow (Dr Johnson remarks that many a man has committed suicide for want of knowing how to darn a stocking)—or it may be only for solace in the little rubs and irritations of common life—who would nevertheless be quite unable to picture to themselves the manifold transitions through which this little wonder-worker arrives at perfection.

Considering the great antiquity of needle-work as an employment, and the importance it had attained as early as the Saxon era of English history, it is strange that the establishment of needle-making, as a staple manufacture of our country, cannot be referred back to a more remote period than is actually the case. In primitive times, when the thorn was adapted to answer, however rudely, the purposes of a needle, every individual could of course supply his own wants; but as years and civilisation advanced, and the article fashioned of wood or bone assumed an improved form, we might naturally conclude, that particular persons would have devoted themselves to the task of catering for a demand which must always have been extensive. No distinct trace, however, of such a branch of industry is to be discovered in England before the latter part of the reign of Henry VIII., although steel needles made on the continent had been sparingly introduced and employed. They

are said to have been originally invented by the Spaniards, who were no doubt much indebted to the discovery for the high reputation of their embroidery, and of the lace famous throughout the world as Spanish Point. It is asserted in Stow's *Chronicles*, and on this authority accepted as a fact, that steel needles were first made here in 1545, by a Spanish Moor, who refused to communicate his secret. Another author, taking up the thread of the narrative where Stow had dropped it, reports the art to have fallen into abeyance after the death of the mysterious Moor, until the advent, in 1566, of one Elias Krause, a German, and subsequently of skilled artisans from France, established the manufacture on a firmer footing. Finally, on the 10th of November 1566, the needle-makers of London having multiplied abundantly, were incorporated and endowed with a magnificent coat of arms emblematical of their calling, to which has since been added the crest of a negro's head, in memory of their founder. This ceremonial had taken place in Paris fifty-seven years earlier, and the fact enables us to form an idea of the relative ages of the art in the two countries. It must not be supposed that this public acknowledgment of its existence found the craft in a very flourishing condition; the price of the article was certainly high, but the time and labour then absorbed in its production prevented the trade from becoming correspondingly lucrative. It may not be undesirable at this point to examine the process of needle-making, as carried on in bygone times, though incurring thereby a risk of some slight repetition; but a glance at the workman toiling in his own home, without the assistance of mill-power, will enable us to appreciate more perfectly the advantages of modern science and the principle of division of labour.

Having provided himself with wire of the size required—which, previously to the year 1563, he was obliged to import from Spain or Germany, but after that time manufactured himself—the artisan proceeded to cut it into needle-lengths, flattening one end of these on an anvil to form the head and eye. When softened over the fire, each piece was partially pierced at the flat end by means of a square punch, hammered half through; a repetition of this process with another punch on a leaden block, completed the perforation of the eye. The roughness produced on the surface was remedied by cutting a groove in the flat part of the needle on either side, after which the head was rounded with a hand-file, and the point formed in the same way. At this stage the wares were spread out in an iron pan, suffered to remain over a charcoal fire until red-hot, thrown into cold water to harden; again submitted to the influence of fire, till they were perfectly tempered, and then straightened one by one with a few taps of the hammer. The next operation was scouring; and with this object they were arranged in heaps and rolled up in buckram, sprinkled over with emery-dust and oil of olives. These rolls, tightly bound at each end, were placed beneath the feet of the needle-maker, who worked them to and fro whilst his hands were busied with other departments of his business; and the scouring completed, the needles were taken out, washed with soap and water, dried in bran, sorted, counted, and arranged for sale. After this enumeration of merely the more important processes to which each needle was formerly subjected by one pair of hands, the reader will easily imagine that any price which would have seemed reasonable to the purchaser, must have failed to be highly remunerative to the maker.

Although the convenience of finding an immediate market for the fruits of their industry attracted the first English needle-makers to the metropolis, it continued for a short time only to be the head-quarters of the manufacture. About the time of Cromwell, it was commenced at the village of Long Crendon, in

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Buckinghamshire, a family named Greening, proficient in the art, having, it is said, been transplanted thither through the influence of the Damera, a distinguished Catholic house, who interested themselves in the prosperity of the neighbourhood. It never, however, rose to a high point, the goods produced there being of a coarser description; as, for instance, sail and packing needles, together with those used for knitting, netting, and surgical purposes. At the present day, Long Crendon affords employment only to two steam-mills and forty workmen, who are paid at a low rate of wages; it is, therefore, obviously to another locality we must follow the prosperous fortunes of our art.

On the western borders of Warwickshire lies a tract of country marked by many picturesque and beautiful features, and including within its limits various townships and villages, the most notable of which are Redditch, Studley, and Alcester. Here it was that needle-making took root most kindly, and here it has continued to grow and prosper, concentrating itself now on one point, now on another, but never wandering to any great extent beyond the bounds of the district. We have scarcely so much as a local tradition to guide us to the date and circumstances of its introduction into these regions; but the names of the oldest families of needle-makers, the Blundells, Hewitts, Rawlings, Alcock, and Chatterlys, who may be said to constitute the aristocracy of the body, give token of their Norman descent, which is further testified by their adhesion to the Roman Catholic faith. It is commonly supposed that their ancestors were induced to settle here by the efforts of the well-known Warwickshire family of the Throckmortons, so far back as the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. The trade appears to have taken rise at Studley, a considerable village, situated on a swift and beautiful stream called the Arrow, affording a plentiful supply of the useful emery-stone. About the year 1700, a mill worked by horses was established here for pointing and scouring needles with greater expedition; and this system prevailed until an inhabitant of Alcester fitted up some old flour-mills on the Arrow for the same purpose, and since then, water-power has continued to be the favourite agent.

Some years later, we find the private needle-makers enlarging their operations, and aspiring to the dignity of manufacturers. In 1750, a person named Mackenzie set up an establishment in the purlieus of London, and, having designed some improvements in the finishing of the wares, gained for his Whitechapel needles a renown which might even now find an echo in the memory of many an ancient dame. Despite his reputation, however, Mackenzie became embarrassed, and was on the point of quitting England to join a needle-making colony settled at Limerick, when he was overtaken by a creditor from Studley named Rawlings, who compelled him to surrender, in payment of the debt, those precious tools with which he had been accustomed to work his improvements. Among these, was an implement christened by the designer his money-spinner, used in giving a peculiar burnish to the head of the needle, which was thence termed 'silver-eyed.' Having possessed himself of the means, and learned at the same time how to apply them, Charles Rawlings was able to surpass all rivals in the appearance of his goods; and being anxious to make the most of this favourable turn of fate, he undertook to silver the eyes for other manufacturers, at the rate of a shilling per thousand, which paid him half a guinea an hour for his labour. But the secret he had gained by the exercise of his power over Mackenzie, was in turn wrung from himself by treachery. The story runs, that a man named Waterhouse having brought a large packet of needles to be silvered one dark night, took the opportunity of mounting by a ladder to the window of the room where Rawlings was engaged at work, and having acquainted

himself by close observation with the whole process, lost no time in diffusing his knowledge. After the reverses of Mackenzie, the manufactory at Whitechapel gradually sunk into obscurity; and at the close of the eighteenth century, Alcester was the point on which fortune seemed to shower her gifts with the most liberal hand. But a rival both to Studley and Alcester was destined shortly to rise up at their very doors; and Redditch, which was only a third-rate needle-making village some forty years ago, gained in importance from that time, and is now regarded as the capital of the district, and *par excellence* the seat of the trade at the present day.

We have now traced the art of needle-making through many capricious wanderings to its home; but should glance back for a moment at the more prominent events in its mechanical history. The year 1800 witnessed the first attempt to use stamps and presses for the purpose of eyeing needles with greater expedition; and eleven years later, Messrs Morrall, Archer, & Morrall, an enterprising firm, to whom the most valuable improvements are attributable, adapted the system to common use, and succeeded in drilling two eyes at each pull of the press; but so strong was prejudice, that it was found necessary to remove the regularity of appearance presented by needles so made, and to give them the look of hand-made wares. The universal adoption of machinery about 1824 proved, of course, very detrimental to the interests of the hand-workers; and their sense of the injury became so strong, that they destroyed all the machines at Redditch, and were advancing to Studley with similar intentions, when stopped by legal and military force. Seeing that it was hopeless to fight against the new system, the majority wisely enlisted in its ranks; and the master-stampers having been prevailed on by their employers to teach, and, if possible, provide the men with work, they became ultimately well satisfied with the change; and so ended, in this instance, the well-won contest between the spirits of past and present. One faithful votary of former customs still remains, in the person of an old man, who had made an agreement in his youth to supply a certain London house with needles as long as he should be able to work, and to be kept by them in constant employment at a stated price. Both parties are faithful to their engagement; and the residence of William Bradbury, the last artificer of hand-made needles, is generally pointed out as worthy of a stranger's attention.

The principle of the needle-making process, in our own time, does not differ greatly from what it was two centuries ago; but the economy of time and labour which has been achieved by improvement in its details, would seem to render the comparison worth making; we therefore conclude our sketch with a glance at a Redditch factory. The wire of which the needles are made is now supplied to the workman in thick coils, two of which he takes together, and being provided with a gauge and a large pair of shears, partially fixed to the walls of the cutting-room, soon accomplishes his task—that of severing the wire into lengths, each suitable for two needles. The coil having been circular, the short pieces being proportionably curved, they are removed to another department, that they may undergo the operation of straightening. With this view, some 10,000 or 15,000 are placed within two iron rings, which enclose them firmly at either end. The whole having been made red-hot in an oven, the wires are rubbed to and fro by a small bar of iron, itself partially curved, which causes them to rotate and press upon each other; so that, in a few moments, the wires will be straightened, and fit, when cold, for the hand of the pointer. The grindstones used in the third part of the process are about ten or twelve inches in diameter, and revolve at an immense velocity by means of water-wheels. The

pointer takes sixty or a hundred needles, according to their size, places them evenly on the palm of the right hand, covers them with the left, and then applies the ends, which are suffered to project a little, to the grindstone, which gives the delicately tapered form. The other extremity of the wires, which, it should be remembered, are designed to form two needles, having been likewise submitted to the stone, the grinder is ready for a fresh instalment; and, if a skilful workman, is able to finish off 10,000 in an hour.

This branch of the business, though presenting no great difficulty, was once very highly remunerated, owing to its injurious effect upon the health of the workmen, who inhaled at each breath a large quantity of needle-dust, and, in consequence, seldom survived the age of thirty-five. They belonged to the most degraded part of the local population—only those without character, or such as were willing to sacrifice everything for a short term of riotous enjoyment, feeling the inducement of high wages powerful enough to overcome the principle of self-preservation. Much anxiety was felt to benefit the condition of this class: the Society of Arts offered prizes for any invention tending towards this point, and a mouth-guard was designed, which, though efficacious, the pointers refused to use, from the fear that it would lower their wages. In 1846, whilst earning from two to six pounds a week, they struck for increased payment; and as the masters were resolute in holding their ground, the strike continued for twelve months, by the end of which time, many of the manufacturers' stocks were sold off, the general body of needle-makers out of employment, and the turn-outs themselves in the greatest distress. When an arrangement had been effected, Dr Holland's fan for blowing away the particles of dust from the workshops, which had been used with complete success by the grinders of Sheffield, was introduced into the principal needle-manufactories, and soon overcame the ignorant prejudices of those whom it was designed to benefit. This machine has now been in constant use for some years, and a marked change is already evident in the moral and physical condition of the pointers.

In resuming the history of the needle, at the stage last treated of, we must follow it through the process of washing and drying over a fire, succeeded by that of stamping, when the wire is placed between two dies, which flatten it in the centre, and impress the form of the two heads, making indentations to shew the proper place for the eyes, and also to mark the point of separation. Thus prepared, it is taken to a hand-press, where Mr Morrall's invention comes into use, and the eyes of the twin needles are pierced simultaneously. The next operation is performed exclusively by children: it consists in fifty double needles, placed between two wires, being fastened by steel springs to a strip of wood, and in this position having a file passed over them to remove the projections caused by stamping. The double needles, still united, are now spitted, or, in common phraseology, threaded on wire, and then divided in the proper place by gentle manipulation between the thumb and fingers; the heads are next filed into a round form, and the roughness removed from the inside of the eye. The needles having now advanced to a stage which really entitles them to the name, are hardened and tempered, by being first made red-hot in a furnace, then plunged into a copper of oil or water, heated again over a slow fire, and suffered to cool gradually. They are then gathered together, mixed with oil, soft soap, and emery-powder, bound up in loose canvas, and placed in a kind of mangle worked by mill-power. During the progress of the scouring or dressing, which lasts about a week, they are frequently taken out, washed, and wrapped up afresh. When cleansed for the last time, the needles are thrown into saw-dust to dry; winnowed, and

afterwards sorted, when the eyes are softened with a red-hot iron bar, and drilled or burnished to prevent them from cutting the thread. The points are now set, and the needles polished on a wheel covered with prepared leather, which is called a 'buff.' Finally, the manufactured goods are counted, and made up into packets; the finer qualities having passed through no less than seventy processes, by means of which 1.1 worth of steel is transformed into L.70 worth of needles.

One hundred millions is the number now made weekly in the Redditch district; two and a half millions having been in 1790 the extent of production, which had only doubled itself before the general use of machinery. About 100 manufacturers and 10,000 workmen are engaged in the trade of needle-making, which is less liable than many others to the accidental fluctuations of fortune.

### MEGASPILI.

MEGASPILI is a Greek convent in Achaia, close to the confines of Arcadia. Passing through the Arcadian town of Kalawryta, which lies in a fine plain, we arrived at the base of the snow-covered hill of Kyllene. We rode along the banks of the rushing Buraikos, in a hollow between two high bare hills. Suddenly the path makes a steep ascent out of the valley, then turns round a corner, and we have before us a cluster of buildings lying close to high and rugged walls of rock, seeming partly as if built into the hollows like swallows' nests. The edges of the rocks hang threateningly over the roofs. This is Megaspili, the largest and richest convent in Greece, containing nearly 200 monks.

The name Megaspili means, in Greek, a great cavern. This cavern, in which the church and part of the convent is now built, is evidently the site of the original temple mentioned by the old Greek traveller Pausanias, who visited Greece in the second century, and describes this cavern as the spot where, according to old tradition, the most ancient Greek seer, Melampus, cured the daughters of Proetus of their madness, by mystical sacrifices and expiations. We have here a proof of what is to be found all over Greece—that Christian worshippers love best to settle themselves in places solemnly consecrated to religious rites in old heathen times. The present convent was built in 1510; the original foundation, however, goes back to the time of Simon and Theodorus, who found here an image of the Virgin, said to be the work of the apostle Luke!

It was on the afternoon of the 1st of May that we rode through the lonely, deeply enclosed valley, finely illumined by the sun's rays, and approached the convent. Never shall I forget the scene which now burst on us. The mild warmth of the sun had allured the monks out of their gloomy cells, and they were sitting in the shady entrance of the convent court. They were chiefly venerable old men, with long flowing white beards, their gray hairs covered with a black cap. They wore a long under-garment of blue, reaching to the feet, confined round the loins by a blue or red shawl; over this was an upper garment, shorter, but also of blue, cut in the same form, and trimmed round the edges with black fur.

These Greek convents exercise hospitality after the manner of the hospices on the Swiss Alps; and on departure, the traveller deposits some small alms in the convent coffers. Having good introductions from Athens, we were made doubly welcome. We had scarcely time to change our dress and take our seats at table, when we were subjected to an endless round of questions as to who we were, whence we came, and what religion we belonged to; for these were the subjects which chiefly awakened the curiosity of the

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solitary monks. On their side, the questions were most animated; but our answers were somewhat tedious, for our knowledge of the language was imperfect, and we had frequently to make use of our guide as an interpreter. The greatest enjoyment I had was in studying the remarkable physiognomies of those patriarchal figures; and I could not help thinking of Lessing, the Düsseldorf artist, who might have found here models for his pictures of the history of Huss. I happened to pull my eye-glass out of my pocket, an article that none of these monks had ever seen before. My travelling-companions wore spectacles, which did not in the least interest the monks, many of whom themselves wore them; but my glass was a marvel to them, and they wished to inspect it more closely. The prior took his spectacles from his eyes, and tried the glass; the rest of the monks followed his example, and it circulated from hand to hand, or rather from eye to eye, some of them having scarcely patience to wait till it came to their turn. And even after the charm of novelty had worn off, a few of them still kept coming to me, and requesting to be allowed another trial of this wonderful instrument.

As evening approached, we quitted the shady courts of the convent, and enjoyed the cool free air under the shadow of some plane-trees, from which we had a charming view of dark cypresses and rugged rocky cliffs, the light-brown colour of which contrasted finely with the white convent-walls. The monks went on questioning us, and it was natural that, after having heard we were Protestants, the conversation should turn on religion. One of them especially, made it evident that he was bent on making converts. He went on with great zeal, inveighing against Catholicism and the pope, and said, that we Protestants, who also hated the pope, must therefore agree with the Greek Church, and ought to join it, for the Greek was the orthodox church. I began in sport to play the zealous Lutheran, and replied that the case was exactly the contrary: that we Protestants were of the true evangelical faith, for we believed nothing that was not in the Bible, and had been taught by Christ and his apostles. But this only irritated him, and the proselytising monk gave me pretty plainly to understand, that we Protestants were nothing better than heretics, and were beyond the pale of salvation. When I continued to press him, and inquired into the fundamental dogmas of his church, he became miserably embarrassed, and had nothing to say but that the Greek Church was neither Protestant nor Catholic, but held the true faith as established by the general council. This answer did not surprise me, for I knew that these monks could scarcely either read or write, very different from the high cultivation to be met with in Italy, at least in all the larger convents.

In the evening, we took a walk with some of the monks in the vicinity of the convent. The churchyard, with its little chapel, lies in the still and peaceful bosom of the green valley. From this spot, one of the monks pointed with evident pride to the highest point of the surrounding rocks, crowned by a small fort, on which a cannon presented its threatening mouth. The monks of Megaspili conducted themselves with great bravery in the Greek Liberation War. Ibrahim Pacha made several attempts, in 1825 and 1826, to seize on their convent; but he was always successfully resisted. The Turks have, however, exercised no religious oppression in Greece. On Mount Athos there are still at the present day twenty Greek convents under Turkish rule, all on a magnificent scale; and the toleration of these convents by the Turks is the more astonishing, it being well known to them that they form the central point for Russian party intrigues.

After this walk, we inspected the church and the other buildings. The church is very simple: in the interior, unsightly. It contains no pictures, for the

miserable daubs which cover the walls are not worthy of the name. The only remarkable object is one already mentioned—an old and much discoloured wax-figure of the Virgin and Child, an ancient Byzantine work, but revered here as that of St Luke, and the discovery of which, according to tradition, gave origin and importance to the convent. There are only three works of the kind said to be by St Luke, all belonging to the Greek Church—this one in Megaspili; another in the convent of Keety, in the Isle of Cyprus; and a third at Mount Malas, in Trebizond. The monks kissed the figure with pious rapture, and even our dragoman, who in other religious matters is a sly rationalist, could scarcely be satisfied with kissing and worshipping this figure, to which the whole of Greek Christendom makes continual pilgrimage.

From the church we were taken into the wine-cellar, the sight of which convinced us that the pious monks know well how to season the intervals between fasting and praying. Tun was piled on tun, and immense tuns too. Not that the largest of them was quite so large as the celebrated Heidelberg tun, but neither was it, like it, a mere spectacle for exhibition, but an article in daily use. We tasted the wine, and found it sour; but I doubt whether the rogues gave us their best. On our return from this subterranean apartment, we passed the door of a room which they said was the library. On my expressing a desire to see it, they hesitated, and presently one of them said that the key was lost. I smiled, and thought how very significant it was that the key of the library should be lost, and not that of the wine-cellar. It afterwards appeared that I had done the good monks injustice, for it was told me in Athens they are always very mysterious about their library, which is said to contain many rare works; amongst others, a German translation of the Bible by Luther, which the great reformer sent to the monks of Megaspili, with a dedication by his own hand, for he long cherished the hope of enlisting the Greek Church on his side in his struggle against the papacy.

I shall never forget the afternoon spent in this convent. I felt as if suddenly transported into Italy out of desolate, uncultivated Greece. The beautiful and carefully tended cypresses contributed to foster this delusion; but it did not last long. Where are to be found here those signs of the refined culture of the arts of the middle ages, which render so attractive even the smallest Italian convent? These swallows' nests, piled above each other like boxes, are picturesque enough; but where, in this confused jumble, are the charming models of Roman architecture? And these gardens down there, winding up the mountains like an amphitheatre, and which the monks take a truly idyllic pleasure in planting out—they please us doubly, because they remind us of home and of the fresh green we have so long been deprived of; but he who has once seen the artistic splendour of an Italian convent-garden, with its rose-trees and splashing fountains, looks in vain for the renewal of such pleasing impressions here. Where, too, are the shady piazzas, with their fine frescoes, which have made the Italian masters so renowned? Here, if anywhere, we may learn what a misfortune it has been to Greece, that throughout the middle ages down to the latest times, it was cut off from European culture. The Italian convents do not suit the present times, but we reverence them for the mighty past, when, by their means, the arts and sciences were preserved, and instruction imparted to the people. But as for these Greek convents, the past and the present are equally gloomy. Where is their art?—where their science?—where their efforts to diffuse education? The monks know nothing, learn nothing, give no instruction to the young, who have nothing for it but to become monks themselves—the country is poor, depopulated, entirely without active energy. Here, in this charming spot, dwell two hundred klers,

who deprive the country of their labours, and live on the sweat of the poor man's brow.

These considerations forced themselves on me in spite of my efforts to banish them, that I might not wilfully disturb present enjoyment. At night, we had an excellent supper with two of the monks. The beds were especially comfortable for us weary travellers. Next morning, in magnificent weather, we rode off and returned to the world again. The monks were in church, and we heard a long way off the sound of their nasal singing at matins.

#### A CANADIAN GRACE DARLING.

The following account of a truly heroic incident appears in a Buffalo newspaper. The heroine referred to is a Mrs Becker, residing on the Canadian shore of Lake Erie:—

'On the morning of the 20th November 1854, the schooner *Conductor* left the port of Amherstburg, bound for Toronto, with a cargo of 10,000 bushels of corn. The wind blew fresh from the south-west all day—a heavy sea running meantime. About five o'clock P.M., the wind increased to a perfect hurricane, and all the canvas was reefed snug down. Toward midnight, a severe storm arose. The topsail-sheets were carried away, the boat was washed from the davits, the decks swept clean of everything, and the vessel would not obey her helm, and seemed to settle in the trough of the sea.

About four o'clock in the morning of the 21st, the crew of the schooner made what they supposed to be Long Point Light; but it was really the light at Long Point Cut. The thickly drifting snow instantly obscured this light; and in about half an hour afterwards the vessel struck. Although she was not more than 200 yards from the shore, it was impossible to form an accurate opinion as to the locality, because of the thickly drifting snow. The sea made a clear breach over her, and forced the crew into the rigging, where they remained from five o'clock in the morning until two in the afternoon. Ice was fast making all the time. The crew then desisted a woman and two little boys approaching along the beach.

The woman and children built a fire on the shore, and made signs to the sailors to swim ashore. The sea was so great they were afraid to venture, until the captain, thinking the risk of drowning better than almost certain death by cold and exposure, struck out from the wreck, and by extraordinary efforts nearly reached the shore; but his strength failed, and being caught by the under-tow, he would have been carried out, had not the woman come to his assistance. She, seeing his critical situation, came to him as speedily as the deep water would permit, and having walked in up to her neck, fortunately reached him, he being utterly exhausted. The woman supported the man, and drew him ashore, having been herself several times beaten down by the force of the waves. With the assistance of the boys, she drew him to the fire, and resuscitated him.

The mate of the schooner next struck out, but in like manner failed to reach the shore, and sank. The captain, supposing himself to be sufficiently restored, went to the assistance of the mate, but again himself gave way; and the woman went again into the angry waters, out to the utmost depth at which she could stand, and brought the two men ashore. The mate seemed to be lifeless, but was at length restored. In addition to these efforts, five several times did the woman go out to the receding surge, and at each time bring an exhausted, drowning seaman ashore, until seven persons—the master, mate, and five of the crew—were saved. It was evening now, and one man who could not swim still clung to the rigging. During the whole night, the woman paced back and forward along the shore, renewing the fire, encouraging the rescued men, giving them food and warm tea, and administering to their comfort. From time to time she would pause, and wishfully regarding the stranded vessel, thus give utterance to her humanity: "Oh, if I could save that poor man, I should be happy!" When morning at last came on the 22d, the storm having abated, the sea was less violent. The master and crew being now strengthened

and invigorated by the food and fire, constructed a raft, and reached their comrade, whose resolute spirit, though fast giving way, was still sufficient to enable him to retain his position in the rigging. Thus he, too, was saved, though badly frozen. The crew remained at the cabin of Mr S. Becker nearly a week before they were able to depart.

On the week following this occurrence, two American vessels were lost on the same point, whose crews were greatly comforted by Mrs Becker, whose husband was still engaged in trapping. The crews of these vessels were sheltered in her cabin, and were the recipients of her hospitable and humane attentions and care.

The account concludes with a certificate from the captain and crew; and we learn that an effort has been successfully made in Canada to offer to Mrs Becker a pecuniary acknowledgment of her spirited conduct. She has, however, expressed a desire that the money should be appropriated to the education of her children. She and her husband are said to gain their living by 'shing.

#### TAMING SPIDERS.

How easily spiders are made to know the voice of their master, is familiar to all, from many a sad prisoner's tale. When the great and brilliant Lazun was held in captivity, his only joy and comfort was a friendly spider: she came at his call; she took her food from his finger, and well understood his word of command. In vain did jailers and soldiers try to deceive his tiny companion; she would not obey their voices, and refused the tempting bait from their hand. Here, then, was not only an ear, but a keen power of distinction. The despised little animal listened with sweet affection, and knew how to discriminate between not unsimilar tones! So it was with the friend of the patriot Quatremere d'Ijonville, who paid with captivity for the too ardent love of his country. He also had tamed spiders, and taught them to come at his call. But the little creatures were not only useful to him, but to the nation to which he belonged; for, when the French invaded Holland, the prisoner managed to send them a message that the inundated and now impassable country would soon be frozen over, so that they would be able to march over the ice-bridged swamps and lakes; for spiders, true barometers as they are, had taught him to read, in their queer habits, the signs of approaching winter. The frost came, and with it the French; Holland was taken, and the lucky prophet set free. The spiders, alas! were forgotten.—*Stray Leaves from the Book of Nature.*

#### MARRIAGES IN PORTUGAL.

The laws present some curious features in respect to parent and child. The females of Portuguese families are subjected to a seclusion, the rigour of which is with difficulty understood by a foreigner. If, however, a lover can produce evidence of his having entered into an engagement with a girl, no matter how young, he has the power to issue a process, under the authority of the proper tribunal, by which, on the simple proof that it is the girl's wish also, he may remove her from the residence of her parents, to be *impounded*—*Estar em deposito*—until of proper age for marriage. The agents in forwarding such matters are usually elderly dames, of no occupation and little character; and so ardently are these affairs sometimes managed, that the first intimation received by the parent is the judge's order to yield, perhaps, an only child, to the custody of strangers; in a similar position to a ward of Chancery, alike away from the supposed vigilance of the law, and the real protection of a sorrowing parent, who, having no power to disinherit a disobedient child, has frequently the additional pang of feeling a conviction that such portion of his divided property as will fall to his child is likely to be wasted in riot, or dissipated by the careless improvidence of a worthless husband.—*Owen's Here and There in Portugal.*

Printed and Published by W. and R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 239 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by JAMES FRASER, 14 D'Oiler Street, DUBLIN, and all Booksellers.